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Plan Would Shift Taxpayer Subsidies from Insurance Companies to Medicare

Earlier today, <u>I unveiled my plan</u> to cut the current \$1 million tax shelter for insurance companies' executive compensation. Current law allows businesses to deduct up to \$1 million annually per executive as a business expense. My proposal would limit this amount to \$400,000—the President's salary—for health insurance companies that will profit as a result of health insurance reform.

The plan, which I will offer as an amendment to health insurance reform legislation, does not dictate what a business pays an employee, but it does limit the taxpayer subsidies for the compensation. The proposal is expected to raise about \$651 million over the next 10 years, which will be required to go toward the Medicare Trust Fund to continue providing the benefits our seniors need and deserve.

It is a fair policy aimed at encouraging health insurance companies to put premium dollars toward lower rates and more affordable coverage, not in the pocketbooks of their executives.

My amendment applies to insurance companies that earn at least 25 percent of their income from premiums that are generated by the individual health insurance mandate in the bill. Should health insurance reform become law, these companies would profit from millions of new customers purchasing insurance coverage for the first time. My amendment will ensure that premiums from new enrollees are paying for better care, not executives' salaries

I am proud of this proposal, which will reassure American consumers and taxpayers that health insurance executives aren't receiving a personal windfall – and that the companies they work for are not receiving excessive tax breaks. At the same time, this proposal protects our seniors of today and tomorrow by ensuring that the Medicare Trust Fund remains strong.

As always, I welcome your comments.

Blanch L. Linish

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